



# **Oakhill Drive Public School**



## **Band Program Handbook - 2021**

---

## **Welcome!**

The Oakhill Drive Public School Band Program offers a fun and rewarding musical learning experience and is open to students in years 3-6.

The Band Program is coordinated by a committee, which is a sub-committee of the ODPS P&C. The Band Committee is comprised of the Band Coordinator, parents, school staff, and the Band Directors. The program is fully self-funded and run by a paid coordinator and a dedicated team of volunteers.

Oakhill Drive has over 180 students participating in the Band Program. There are three bands and four ensembles. Students commence in Junior Band and progress through to Senior and Concert Band. Ensembles (Woodwind, Brass, and Percussion) are available to Senior and Concert band members. String Ensemble caters to string students who already have several years' experience on their instrument.

New students to Oakhill Drive Public School may audition and be assessed for placement in the appropriate band.

Our Band Directors are Mr. Jamie Watkins and Mrs. Renee Burrows. Band rehearsals are held weekly before school in the school hall. Tutoring is provided to students in our dedicated music teaching rooms. Students pay band membership fees, tutoring fees and instrument hire (if required).

Our bands and ensembles perform at the Sydney Eisteddfod and other competitions where they have achieved exceptional results. Further performance opportunities include school assemblies and other school and community events. An annual band camp is held in May where students participate in intensive rehearsals and instrument tuition. The camp is an excellent opportunity for students to further their musical knowledge and skills, and to deepen friendships while having lots of fun!

Thank you for your interest in the Oakhill Drive Public School Band Program. We welcome you to the Program and look forward to another fantastic year of music!

Jamie Watkins, ODPS Band Coordinator

On behalf of the ODPS Band Committee

---

# Learning an Instrument

## Educational Benefits

Research has shown that learning an instrument can have substantial benefits to a child's academic, creative, motor, listening and social skills, and can help to develop perseverance and self-discipline. ([Benefits of studying Music](#))

Learning an instrument has been shown to help children learn and practise important non-musical academic skills, such as:

- In listening to and performing music, children's sense of rhythm encourages counting and memory. Listening to music, particularly when playing in a band or ensemble, helps students to focus their attention on one voice in many - a useful skill in a busy classroom!
- In learning to read music, children are strengthening literacy skills as they learn to make sense of the "musical language". As music is also a mathematical discipline, concepts of time, fractions, division and positioning are also developed.
- Children also gain a simple understanding of the science and physics of sound as they learn to produce different tones, volumes and effects on their instrument.
- The self discipline and concentration involved in learning their instrument helps students to focus on their own learning processes – an ability which transfers to other academic areas.

## Social and Physical Benefits

- Fine motor co-ordination and hand eye co-ordination is improved.
- Physical fitness is improved through correct breathing techniques.
- Development of positive attitudes and skills in teamwork.
- Development of self-confidence and self-esteem through performance.
- Personal organisational skills and independence are encouraged in children through following timetables, rehearsal schedules and performances.

---

## Which Instrument?

When choosing an instrument for your child, you need to consider the following:

- **Preference:** Your child must want to play the instrument and enjoy the sound it produces. It can be difficult encouraging a child to learn an instrument he/she is not motivated to play. Sometimes, it is not possible for students to begin on their first choice of instrument.
- **Physical size:** Some instruments are quite large and consideration of the child's size is important, as not all students are capable of managing the larger instruments just yet.
- **Teeth:** Teeth loss and growth can cause difficulty for some instruments. Braces can also cause problems in some cases. If you are concerned please speak to the Band Director or a tutor.
- **Availability** of instrument
- **Practicality** of instrument
- **Financial cost / investment**

*Please Note:*

*As with most activities, learning an instrument can be expensive, especially when considering the outlay for the instrument and the essential lessons required. We strongly recommend that parents consider the costs associated with the purchase/hire and maintenance of instruments as well as the tutorial and band fees associated with learning.*

*Some instruments are inherently more expensive than others due to their size, or the intricacy of their design and construction. Instruments can also vary considerably in price due to brand, quality and condition, and as such it is imperative that you do some personal research when considering an appropriate instrument for your child and family. Please speak to the Band Coordinator if you require any assistance regarding researching instrument costs.*

---

## Who can join the band?

The Band Program is open to all students in Years 3-6. The Program is as follows:

- **Junior Band:** Any child in Year 3 or above may join. Junior Band members usually commence in Year 3. Previous musical experience is not required, as this band is for complete beginners.
- **Senior Band:** Students in Senior Band may join after playing an instrument for one year in Junior Band. Senior band is a large, strong and advanced band for students in years 4-6.
- **Concert Band:** A high-level performance band which provides exciting challenges for students who are confident enough to attempt more difficult musical works. Entry and acceptance to Concert Band is by audition only.
- **Ensembles:** At Oakhill Drive PS we are fortunate to be able to provide musical extension to senior students through our Ensembles Program. An ensemble is available for motivated students in Senior and Concert Band. This is an additional weekly rehearsal and cost. It does, however, provide a wonderful opportunity for students to extend their abilities and knowledge, play in a smaller ensemble group, and perform together. We currently offer a Woodwind, Brass and Percussion Ensemble. It is optional to join an ensemble, and places can be limited due to the large number of interested students.
- String Ensemble is open to students in Years 3 – 6 who are already learning the violin, viola, cello, or double bass with a private teacher outside of school. Private lessons for string instrumentalists are not currently available in our Tutoring Program.
- Students new to ODPS who have had some previous instrument tuition and band membership may be eligible to apply to join Senior Band or Concert Band after successfully passing an audition. This will be at the discretion of the Band Directors and Band Committee, as an instrumental and musical balance must be maintained.

---

## Band Program

The Band Program is split into two separate components:

- **Band Rehearsals**
- **Instrumental Tuition**

### Band Rehearsals

<b>Band</b>	<b>Rehearsal</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Junior Band	Wednesday 7:30-8:55am	All students are to arrive at 7:30am to help set up.
Senior Band	Tuesday 7:30-8:55am	All students are to arrive at 7:30am to help set up.
Concert Band	Monday 7:30-8:55am Thursday 7:30-8:55am	All students are to arrive at 7:30am to help set up.
Ensembles (Woodwind, Brass, Percussion, String)	Lunchtime – 40min Days subject to change each year.	Optional for students in Senior or Concert Band

### Instrument Tuition

In addition to attending the weekly band rehearsal, it is **mandatory** that all band students attend a weekly tutorial lesson in order to keep up with the progress of the band. **This is a condition of each student's continued membership in our program.**

ODPS Band offers an instrument tuition program at school. Students have the opportunity to learn their instrument with experienced tutors in half-hour shared or half-hour private lessons. Tutorial lessons occur both during and outside of school hours in our dedicated music rooms (Music HQ). You will be allocated a tutor based on your child's choice of instrument. Although pricing is set by the ODPS Band Committee, tutoring is a private arrangement between the student and their allocated tutor, and the tutor will contact you and advise of their available times. Tutors provide 8-9 lessons per term and will invoice you directly for the cost of lessons. Some tutors are required by law to charge GST on top of the school-set fees, and this will be communicated to you prior to entering a tutoring agreement with them.

All ODPS conductors and tutors have a current Working With Children Check, undertake Child Protection training, and have CPR, asthma, and anaphylaxis training.

---

## Tutorial Lessons – Terms and Conditions

1. Missed lessons due to school events or illness will be made up at the end of each term or a credit will be given if the tutor is given more than 24 hours notice.
2. If there is an **unexplained absence** e.g. child forgetting their instrument or not showing up for their lesson, **this lesson will not be credited or made up by the tutor**.
3. Instrument lesson fees are paid per term in advance to the Tutor and are **not refundable**.
4. Written notice must be given to the tutor no later than the last week of the prior term if the student is not continuing with the lessons the following term, otherwise full payment for the following Term is still required.
5. When tutorial fees are not paid by the due date, the tutor has the right to cease lessons until payment is made.

## Award Program

The Band Award Program has been developed in order to give band students goals to work towards and to encourage students to make continued progress in their playing. Students are encouraged by their tutor to set goals towards achieving an award each year.

There are 5 levels - **EMERALD**, **RUBY**, **SAPPHIRE**, **DIAMOND** and **DIAMOND EXTENSION**, with the aim being that students complete approximately one level for each year of playing. Students work on these awards with their tutors, and the tutor will assess when each component of the award has been successfully completed. Students are then required to perform one of their pieces for the rest of their bandmates. Once students have satisfactorily completed all components of a Gemstone Award, they will be given a certificate of completion at their Thursday assembly.

The requirements for each level are outlined below. Students will be given a Gemstone Award Progress Record sheet for the level which they are currently working on. Students are responsible for looking after their own Progress Record. These sheets should be kept in the student's band folder.

As a guide, students should generally complete one level for each year they have been learning, however there are obviously differences in the speed at which students develop and improve, so this may vary. Some students may complete more than one level per year, while others may complete less.

---

## Performance Opportunities

Our bands perform in school assemblies and events such as the School Open Day, Fun Day, and Music Mornings. We host workshops and concerts with visiting performance groups, such as the NSW Police Band and the CTHS Big Band. We currently enter two competitive Eisteddfods each year, and we are very proud of our achievements. We also take advantage of performing at community events and festivals. These all offer wonderful opportunities for our students to perform and showcase their talents.

## Commitment

Learning an instrument and being a band member requires a considerable level of commitment from both the child and the parent. Students are expected to:

1. Attend weekly band rehearsals
2. Receive weekly instrument tuition
3. Practise regularly
4. Participate in band performances and eisteddfods
5. Attend Band Camp

Bands or music ensembles are similar to sporting teams in that each performance is like a 'final' where every player must be present. The absence of one or more band members affects the balance of the band and therefore the performance of the band. With that in mind we ask that all students joining the band are aware that commitment is for the **entire school year**.

The band program requires **regular and on time attendance at all rehearsals**. If your child is unwell or absent from band a note /email explaining their absence is required. Our Conductors take a roll and assume responsibility for your child at this time. **All students** are also expected to assist in setting up and packing up band equipment (music stands, chairs, drum kit, percussion instruments) each week.



---

## Practise at Home

To ensure continued growth and confidence in instrument playing students are encouraged to practise at home. A regular schedule of practise in addition to school lessons and rehearsals is essential. Individual practise also encourages the steady progress of the band as a whole.

## The Parents' Role

It is very important that parents encourage a student's progress and practice. Students maintain confidence when they continue to practise at home what they have learnt in band and tutoring sessions.

There are also various opportunities for parents to be involved in the Band program. **All families** are required to participate in the Parent Supervision roster to assist at before-school band rehearsals; usually the requirement for each family is once a term. Occasional help will also be required throughout the year, for fundraising activities, transporting students to or setting up for performances.

The Band program depends on the commitment and hard work of a wonderful Band Committee. If you are interested in joining please email the Band Coordinator, Jamie Watkins, at **odpsband@gmail.com**. Without your support, particularly in fundraising, the band would not be able to continue to grow and improve, as we are **fully self-funding**. Any amount of assistance you could give would be greatly appreciated

---

## **Financial Commitment**

### **1. Band Program Fees**

**\$150 per semester (half year) / \$165 for Concert Band students**

All band students are expected to pay band membership fees. These fees are invoiced twice a year (Term 1 and Term 3). This cost covers the Band Directors' fees, purchase of music, Eisteddfod entrance fees, buses, the Band Coordinator position, and other ongoing costs of running the band program. An invoice will be issued each semester.

### **2. Tuition fees**

**\$20.00 per shared half hour lesson, \$37.50 per half hour private.**

You will be invoiced and charged for 8-9 lessons per term. Payment is to be made to the Music Tutor directly each term.

### **3. Hire of School Instrument**

**\$260.00 per year + a \$50 refundable bond.**

For all low brass instruments and bass guitars the school hire fees will be reduced to \$180 per year + \$50 bond.

Invoices for Band fees are sent out in Term 1 and Term 3. Payment can be made by direct deposit or cheque. Please place fee payments / replies via the 'Band Box' in the school office. Payment is expected within 2 weeks of the invoice date. If fees are not paid a child may be excluded from the program. If there is any difficulty in making payment it is important that you contact the Band Coordinator directly.

### **4. Purchase of Percussion Kit**

**\$145 each for all new percussion students.**

Percussion kits include a stick bag, drumsticks, mallets, glockenspiel sticks, glockenspiel, practice pad, triangle and beater.

**\*\*\* Please note: Band and hire fees are not refundable.\*\*\***

---

## Instruments

Students are strongly encouraged to attend Information Night and trial different instruments. It is important that a child is comfortable with their choice of instrument and physically able to play it and care for it.

Oakhill Drive Public School Band offers places for:

Tuba	Trombone
Clarinet	Trumpet
Alto Saxophone	Electric Bass Guitar
Tenor Saxophone	French Horn
Baritone / Euphonium	Percussion
Flute	Oboe

### Instrument Hire

Students participating in the band program who do not own instruments have the following instrument hire options:

#### Hiring a school-owned instrument-

The school has a limited supply of instruments available for students to hire. Instrument Hire Price is \$260 per year, plus a \$50 refundable bond.

Please Note: The hire agreement through ODPS Band is for **one full calendar year**. Should the agreement be cut short for any reason, no refund will be given as the cleaning and servicing costs must be covered to prepare the instrument for the next student. The \$50 Bond will be refunded at the end of the hire period only if care has been taken with the instrument and it is returned in a good condition, and all hire fees have been paid in full.

(Bass Guitars and amplifier hire fees are reduced to \$180 per year due to lower servicing costs. Low brass instruments are reduced to \$180 to encourage more students to play these important instruments).

**Please note: School instruments for hire are allocated with preference to Junior Band students first. Hire Agreements are for one year only. After this period, parents may choose to purchase or hire from an external source.**

#### Hiring through an external source (eg. Dural Music, Turrumurra Music)

Instruments can be hired through an external source. The agreement is between the hirer and the company and fees are paid directly to them. Some companies may offer 'hire to buy' plans.

---

## Maintenance of Instruments

School instruments will be collected at the end of each year for servicing over the Christmas break. **Problems arising during the year should be reported to the Band Coordinator at [odpsband@gmail.com](mailto:odpsband@gmail.com) and the tutor as soon as possible so that repairs can be arranged.** Should the student cause any damage to the instrument, the repair costs will be the responsibility of the parents/guardians. The bond paid at the start of the year may be used to contribute to the repair costs.

It is strongly recommended that hired instruments be added to your Home and Contents Insurance, as instrument replacement costs can be very high and a student's parents/guardians will be responsible for this cost, should the instrument be lost or stolen.

To care for instruments we recommend the following:

- Do not attempt to put your instrument together until your music tutor has shown you how. Please treat your instrument with respect.
- Take care with curious younger siblings around your practice area.
- Always keep your instrument in its case when you are not playing it.
- Do not put pencils or anything sharp in the case unless there is a section for it.
- Do not sit on your instrument case.
- Clean and oil your instrument regularly – your tutor will teach you how.
- Clearly label your instrument with your name, phone number and school.
- Respect others' instruments.
- Do not attempt to repair a damaged instrument yourself.
- Have your instrument serviced yearly.

Start-up cleaning kits are provided with all hire instruments at a small additional cost. Students are responsible for the purchase of ongoing consumables for brass and wind instruments such as oils, grease, reeds and cloths.

Students must store their instrument and music bag correctly in the School Hall during the day and **remember to take it home at the end of the day.**

**\*\*\*\* Please Note: *Instruments are not secured overnight, and no responsibility is assumed by the school or the Band Program for any loss or damage to instruments left in the hall after hours. Always take your instrument home at the end of the day.* \*\*\*\***

---

## Condensation Cloths

In the interests of good hygiene, all band members, except percussionists and bass guitarists, must include a condensation cloth, e.g a hand towel, with their band equipment. The cloth should be carried in a plastic bag in each child's band bag. Both the cloth and the plastic bag should be labelled with the student's name.

At rehearsals and tutorials, band members lay the cloths on the floor at their feet to absorb moisture that collects in instruments, especially brass instruments. This is very important when instruments are played in rooms with carpet floor coverings as this moisture is absorbed in the carpet.

At the end of each week, the cloths should be taken home to be washed. Using condensation cloths is **essential** in maintaining a hygienic environment in the hall and classrooms where band rehearsals and tutorials are held.

## Information and Communication

- Check for 'Band News' in the weekly school newsletter.
- Your band coordinator will email you with information, updates and reminders.
- Skool Bag App provides alerts and reminders (please activate "Band" in your push notifications).
- A Band Newsletter will be emailed at the beginning of each term.
- Please advise the Band Co-ordinator at **odpsband@gmail.com** or your band contact if your email address changes at any time.

---

## Band Camp

An annual Band Camp is held in early Term 2. It is a vital part of the band program and involves two days of intensive music tuition together with other recreational activities for students in all Bands. Kids LOVE Band Camp!

Band Camp is a wonderful opportunity for each student to extend his or her musical ability by taking part in rehearsals and tutorials with professional musicians. It is a **fundamental** part of our Band Program at Oakhill Drive Public School each year and **full attendance is expected as part of your child's involvement in our Band Program.**

Students at Band Camp are fully supervised by School Staff, Parent Volunteers, Music Tutors & Band Directors.

Band Camp commences on Saturday morning and concludes Sunday afternoon with a performance for families. Students travel to camp and home again with their parents.

For Band Camp 2021, plans are still being finalised due to the changing nature of the Covid-19 situation in NSW. Arrangements will be finalised towards the end of this year and communicated in Term 1, 2021.

## Band Program Fee Schedule

Fee	Cost	Details
Band Membership	\$150 per semester (\$300 per year), \$165 per semester (\$330 per year) for Concert Band students	Invoiced in Term 1 and Term 3.
ODPS Tutoring	\$37.50 per half hour private lesson \$20.00 per half hour shared lesson	Paid directly to the utotr. 8-9 lessons per Term.
Instrument Hire	\$260 per year + \$50 bond. Low brass & bass guitars \$180 +\$50 bond per year.	Invoiced in Term 4 of the previous year.
Start up Kit for hire instruments	Approx. \$15-\$30 (depends on instrument)	May include cloth, reed, oil, grease. Invoiced in Term 1, once-off cost.
Band Camp	Approx. \$200 for Senior and Concert Band Approx. \$100 For Junior Band	Invoiced in Term 1
Music Book 'Accent on Achievement'	Approx. \$20	Once-off cost
Music Bag	Approx. \$15	Once-off cost

## Application Forms

To participate in the Band Program, you will need to complete an online Application Form at the conclusion of the Band Information Night or over the next few days. You will be advised prior to the end of Term 4 which instrument and place in the band program are available for your child. Prior to Week 1 of Term 1 you will be notified when hired instruments can be collected, and you will also be contacted by the relevant instrument tutor to arrange your lesson times.

---

## **Band Committee**

Oakhill Drive is very fortunate to have a very active and willing body of parent volunteers. We are always looking for more willing helpers to assist with the many facets of managing the band program. If you would be interested in finding out more information please email **[odpsband@gmail.com](mailto:odpsband@gmail.com)**

### **Current positions include:**

School Teacher Liaison  
Band Treasurer  
Instrument Coordinators  
Secretary  
Camp Coordinator  
Events Coordinator  
Junior Band Coordinator  
Conductors

Senior Band Coordinator  
Concert Band Coordinator  
Ensembles Coordinator  
Strings Coordinator  
Awards Coordinator  
Photography  
Music HQ Maintenance

### **Need more information?**

Please contact the Band Coordinator, Mr Jamie Watkins, on 0434 859 050 or at **[odpsband@gmail.com](mailto:odpsband@gmail.com)**.